

"WHAT HAVE THEY SEEN IN  
THINE HOUSE?"

OR

REFLECTIONS ON THE OPENING OF THE  
GREAT EXHIBITION.

A SERMON

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 27th, 1851.

BY

DANIEL MOORE, M.A.

*Perpetual Curate of Camden District, Camberwell.*



LONDON :

KERBY & SON, 190, OXFORD STREET.

1851.

11. 10. 1871



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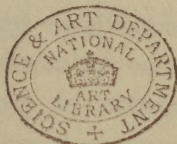
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&c.

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ISAIAH XXXIX. 4.

“WHAT HAVE THEY SEEN IN THINE HOUSE?”

IN a few days, brethren, as you are aware, the curtain is to be drawn aside which is to discover the great pageant of modern times. Such a gathering carries the imaginative mind back to days of tilt and tourney. Royalty invites us to witness a joust among all nations,—a joust not of blunted lance, and crested helm, and mockery of mortal combat,—but a keen, though amicable, encounter of human wits; a strife who shall excel in the arts of industry and peace; mind with mind, and skill with skill, exchanging all the courtesies of an intellectual chivalry. And, as on another memorable occasion in European history, our country is complimented by having the scene of the great spectacle laid on English territory. Our monarch must have her due, from the nations, of graceful respect and homage. Princes must come hither, to behold the collected

products of all the sciences of life ;—the emulous offerings of the world's genius exhibited in friendly competition, as on another 'field of the cloth of gold.'<sup>1</sup>

Diverse, opposite, strangely antagonistic and conflicting, are the feelings with which, by different minds, this great event has been anticipated. It is longed for, it is dreaded,—it is extolled, it is censured,—it is made the day star of a new glory for England, or it is to be the setting of her sun for ever,—according to the complexion of the mind that looks at it, or the interests which the project threatens to endanger. Such manifestations of the popular mind, I think, should not surprise us. The scheme would not be human, if it pleased every body ; and it would not be English, if it did not provide for our national propensity to complain. For myself, I have no

<sup>1</sup> Hume thus describes the circumstances of the selection of the spot for the great meeting of 'the field of the cloth of gold.' "The day of Charles's departure, Henry went over to Calais with the Queen and his whole court ; and from thence proceeded to Guisnes, a small town near the frontiers. Francis, attended in like manner, came to Andres, a few miles distant ; and the two monarchs met, for the first time, in the fields at a place situate between these two towns, but still within the English pale : for Francis agreed to pay that compliment to Henry, in consideration of that prince's passing the sea, that he might be present at the interview. Wolsey, to whom both kings had entrusted the regulation of the ceremonial, contrived this circumstance, in order to do honour to his master."—*Hist. of Eng.* Henry viii. Chap. ii. 1520.



extreme feelings upon the subject, either of hope or fear. It is too great an event not to be attended with results of some sort,—results both good and evil. But if Christians be found faithful; if we each one of us feel that the honour of our country rests upon us; if we exhibit to the stranger within our gates those notes of a living Bible Christianity, — virtue, knowledge, temperance, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity,—all place for fear is taken away; and so sure as there is a moral providence in the world, “God even our own God will give us His blessing.”

Let me try then, brethren, to turn to some moral account the anticipated confluence of all nations, and creeds, and languages in our own gospel-favoured land. The fame of the British people has gone forth into the uttermost parts of the earth,—the fame of our arts and arms, our activity and enterprize, our religion, our liberty, and our laws. Men are coming to us, as the Queen of the South came to Solomon, with raised expectations, and prepared wonder, full of curious and eager anxiety to know whether the practical and social life of England be worthy of its advantages or its name. And the question should be anticipated by each one of us, how far will these expectations have been realized? Will our country have seemed to vindicate her pre-eminence among the nations? In a few months, the vast throng

of strangers will be dispersed again, as chaff on the summer threshing-floor;—each one returning to sit under his own vine, to live under his own laws, to worship the true God or the false, according to the worship of his fathers;—but what will be his living remembrance of the British people? What will our visitors have witnessed of the tokens of our God among us? How far will all their intercourse with us have discovered the pervading influences of pure spiritual Christianity, chastening our pleasures, sanctifying our gains, lending a charm to our friendships, mingling sacred leaven with all our national institutions, and breathing a hallowed fragrance over the relations of our domestic life? What report will they bear back of the queen-nation of the western world? “WHAT HAVE THEY SEEN IN THINE HOUSE?”

I. Let us, first, briefly examine these words in connexion with THE ORIGINAL HISTORY.

The question, as you will remember, was addressed by Isaiah the prophet to a king of Judah, who, vain of his prosperity and greatness, had shewn to some visitors, coming to him from a far country, all the stored and precious treasures of his house. To this act Hezekiah was moved solely by ambition and love of display:—feelings which, especially as shewing themselves immediately after a dangerous sickness, were highly offending to God. Accordingly, Isaiah is sent to



humble the monarch's pride. For this, his weak vanity, all his wealth shall be taken away. His children shall be led captive. The very men to whom he had made a parade of his treasures shall be the first to possess them :—"all the store that is in thine house shall be carried unto Babylon."

i. Many and deeply instructive are the lessons which this history might be made to furnish. We are plainly reminded by it how closely observant God is of our demeanour in the ordinary occurrences of life. Both men and nations must be responsible for the ordering of their common intercourse. God will call us to account for the things we have seen, and the works we have done, and the persons we have conversed with—the means of moral profit we have had, or the impressions for good or evil we have conveyed to other minds. Our going out and our coming in—our meeting with strangers or our discourse with friends,—can never be numbered among things indifferent. "What went ye out for to see?" said Jesus in reference to the Baptist; and "what was it ye conversed of by the way?" he asked his disciples on another occasion. The questions plainly point to the responsibilities of social life. We are to make conscience both of visiting and being visited. Hezekiah failed herein, and hence the indignant and searching question of the prophet "what have they seen in thine house?"

ii. There is another reflection forced upon us by the sacred history which makes the study of it pertinent to our times: namely, that Hezekiah turned to the account of his own vanity and pride *a great opportunity of honouring God and promoting the cause of truth.*

The visit of the Ambassadors to Jerusalem was one of refined oriental courtesy. "At that time Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah, for he had heard that he had been sick." What an occasion was this for the king to have spoken to the Chaldean princes of the great mercy to which he owed his recent recovery. There had come to him men who offered their blind devotions to them that were no gods; how natural for him to have recounted the mysterious gentleness of God's dealings with him, on the day when he "turned his face to the wall and wept sore." How should the full heart have delighted to tell the strangers of the merciful "bitterness," and the returning "peace,"—of the house "set in order," and of the "shadow going backward,"—in the hope that Hezekiah's trust might become their trust, and his God their God. But we read nothing of this. The silver and gold are displayed; but not a word is uttered of Him that giveth the power to get wealth. Spices, armour, treasures, precious things, are gazed on with wondering delight; but the



occasion is not improved for calling the enraptured visitors to the remembrance that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Such conduct in Hezekiah angered the great God. He had lost, and worse than lost, a noble opportunity for good. The city where God had set his name had been visited; the people to whom "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises," had been conversed with; and yet the men depart without testimony, or word, or token on behalf of the true religion. Idolaters they came; and idolaters they returned. Hezekiah had been careful for nothing but to set off his own greatness. For God and His truth he had witnessed nothing. "All that is in mine house have they seen."

These reflections belong naturally to the history of Hezekiah and his times, nor have I any wish to press the accidents of the history into parallelism with our present circumstances. To the extent to which national pride is mixed up with the approaching spectacle, the sacred example should lead to much searching of heart. "Pride and arrogance do I hate," saith the Lord; all pride, pride of wealth, pride of power, pride of endowments, pride of religious light and privilege. Whatever God gives either to men or nations, he gives to be employed for Himself. We have crowns not to wear, but lay at the feet of Jesus. We have in-

deed, much to shew to our visitors,—more than had Hezekiah to shew to the ambassadors of Merodach Baladan; but let us, in all we shew, and in all we might wish to hide, keep steadily in view the responsibilities devolved upon us by the great centering among us of the people of all nations. It may be in our power to do them much good. “What have they seen in thine house?”

II. Let me proceed, therefore, to the main design of my discourse, namely, to inquire what will be the moral and social aspects of Great Britain as exhibited to the mind of intelligent foreigners, WHAT HAVE THEY SEEN? We may begin by bringing together these phenomena of our national life and character which are subjects of permitted gratulation to us; those institutions, in regard of which we need not shrink from comparison with other nations; and wherein, though *we* have nothing to be proud of, yet *they* have much to learn. As for example,

i. They will have seen *constitutional liberty in all its unfettered exercise, neither enfeebled by the institution of monarchy, nor losing its respect for the sovereignty of law.*

I put this, first, because on the science of civil government hang great moral issues. The annals of crime, and sorrow, and disorder, and bankruptcy in a nation, are, for the most part, but the annals



of its misgovernment. As the eagles gather about the carcase, so do the darkest passions of our nature gather about an unstable throne. There is weakness in the powers that be; and this whets ambition, stimulates discontent, calls the reckless adventurer from his obscurity, and finds employment for them that are given to change. Nor is this all. Where instability of rule is, there is no moral progress. The arts of life are at a stand: schemes of philanthropy are checked: learning languishes, and piety decays. Many who are coming over hither can bear sad witness to this. Aiming to increase their liberties, and improve their institutions, they have unhappily thrown their national civilization ten degrees backward. By the virulence of party factions, they have stirred up into morbid and pernicious ferment all the deep fountains of social tranquillity; and all this, as it should seem, just to gratify, in a few turbulent minds, a taste for Constitution-making,—a desire to effect that with strokes of a pen, which all history tells us must be left to grow under the slow teaching and influence of time. How religion has fared in the various struggles for this purpose, need not be told. It is not in such perturbed regions that men feel the silent empire of the spiritual and the unseen:—their very hold on a governing providence is often

loosened; and they have almost said in their hearts, "there is no God."

A result for good, therefore, will have been obtained, if they who visit us go back to bear testimony, from what they have seen, to the blessings of peaceful and settled government; able to adapt itself indeed to the advancing character of human society, but never requiring to be re-moulded or cast anew. Order is of God, and it must be maintained. Overthrowing dynasties, drawing up theoretical charters, taking down by violence the frame-work of ancient governments,—these are not the methods either to exalt a nation, or to make it happy. The corrective principle of any form of government must reside in the institution itself; and the law, while it remains law, must be upheld as the permitted ordinance of God.

What then hath the stranger seen in thine house? whether he be the northern oligarch, breathing threatnings against deliberative assemblies, and seeing no hope of order but in depressing three-fourths of human kind into the condition of serfs of the soil: or the southern republican, restless, rank, and red, hating monarchy under its proper name, but loving a despotism with many heads? Well; first, they will have seen the spectacle of a sovereign living *in* the affections of her people, and ruling *by* them;—her court the



centre of the virtuous, and her palace a graceful English home. Then they will have witnessed an example of a constitution upheld, liberty maintained, law revered, a parliament free to deliberate, and a press free to speak. Our national institutions, they will see, do not favour street tumults. Our magistrates are the servants of law. Our judges are beyond the reach of influence. Our middle classes everywhere are worshippers of order; and our soldiers become almost cowards, if they have to shed citizen-blood. It is not long since all Europe seemed convulsed to its centre: — the whole face of society heaved again. We felt the vibration, but nothing more. Chartism died, and made no sign. Our own neighbourhood was made the field for its great display; and there the admirers of continental anarchy will find its grave.<sup>1</sup>

ii. *Again, our visitors will have seen commercial activity and enterprise, united with a high degree of encouragement given to works of charity and benevolence.*

If there be no land of which it can be so truly said as of Great Britain, that “her merchants are princes,” and her “traffickers are the honourable

<sup>1</sup> The monster chartist meeting was held on Kennington Common, Monday, 10th April, 1848. It was a memorable failure. The stubborn sense of the nation *would* not be agitated; and London remained ingloriously and perversely quiet all the day.

of the earth," so is there none which abounds more in institutions for alleviating the trials of our race, or enlarging the circle of its joys. Should future historians have to write 'departed' on our country's glory, and her cities become desolate and without inhabitant, there will be a story in her architecture to redeem her from forgetfulness, and hide her memory from shame. It will be seen that England lavished on works of benevolence her costliest and her best. And should the stranger in time to come, have to walk among her ruins, and begin to single out the fragments which he must tread lightly on for their very sacredness, he will see how, more than in our mansions for the great, or our halls for the wise, or our monuments to the good, or our columns to the brave, we gloried in institutions which were to lighten human suffering and sorrow,—our hospitals, our schools, our homes for the friendless wanderer, and our asylums for the fatherless child. True, all we do, in this way, comes short of our duty, short of our responsibilities, short of our country's needs; but nowhere else has Christianity exerted such a humanizing influence upon the national character, or achieved such triumphs over the selfishness of man.

'What then have they seen in thine house?' A people full of energy, and enterprise, and zeal: importing treasures from all lands, and sending



their ships into all seas: carrying their heads proudly among the nations; abounding in wealth; devoted to commerce; lovers of literature; patrons of all the arts that liberalize, and expand, and refine the mind;—and yet, not by state aids, but by the mere power of voluntary and associated effort, organizing all those noble institutions which make nations a praise in the earth, and shed the light of a high and holy philanthropy over the face of a selfish and disordered world. Yes, “what have they seen?” Our arsenals, our exchanges, our dock-yards, our streets adorned with palaces, or our river studded with masts like a forest of leafless trees? Aye, but they have seen more,—churches multiplying on every hand, education everywhere extending its influence, missions wafting over all seas the truths of the everlasting gospel,—they have seen the blind endued with a second sight, and the dumb made to speak a new tongue, and the cripple is made straight, and the idiot has a mind, and the maniac is dispossessed of his phrensy by the charm of scientific kindness.<sup>1</sup> They have seen the Bible without lock or seal, and conscience disengaged from

<sup>1</sup> A page in our Post Office Directory would greatly astonish a foreigner. Independently of our Missionary and other religious societies, there are noted, as existing in *London alone*, 145 *public institutions* for the orphan, or the destitute, or those suffering under various bodily or mental maladies.

fetters, an enlightened toleration leaving men as free to worship as they are free to breathe, whilst the mightiest agencies are put in force to bring all hearts under the power of that glorious liberty wherewith Christ would make them free.

Thus, however inadequately provided for, none of the evils which afflict our suffering and sinning race are overlooked, passed by, forgotten by us. England is a Bethesda, though it need greatly a larger number of porches; and if all the enquiry of the stranger were to turn upon our varied charity, and multiform benevolence, and ingenious instrumentalities for good, we need not fear dishonour to our nation from the question, "what have they seen in thine house?"

iii. Further, they who come hither will see a country which God has eminently owned and honoured through the medium of that Christianity, which, though held in too little honour by many among us, is that which, in all ages, has made England great, and for the sake of which, we believe, there yet abide on us all the tokens of his providential favour.

We have never been without a Christianity. Augustine did but revive it. And from the times of the heptarchy downward, God has shewn himself strong on our behalf. In every chapter of British history the God of nations appears for us, putting honour on our arms, throwing his shield over our



liberties, making the sheaves of the nations bow to us as those who have honoured and loved His truth. Who fails to see a providence governing our destinies, in the Roman invasion, in the Norman conquest, in the concession of Magna Charta, in the early struggles for the Reformation, in the over-ruled infirmities of the Stuarts, in the final abdication of their last prince, and in the settlement of the house of Hanover? And revolution on revolution has been seen within the memory of living men, making thrones to tremble, and tyrants to fly, sending conquerors to exile, and sweeping dynasties away. And yet, England has stood. Her good men, under God, have saved her. She has been preserved, not by her Hezekiahs who have ministered to her pride, but by her faithful Isaiahs who have admonished her to be humble. Of the world little accounted of, yet her men of prayer have been the pillars to uphold her throne. The contagion of anarchy has more than once touched our shores; but faithful men have come to the rescue, standing between the living and the dead till the plague was stayed.

Let then the truth be put plainly before our visitors. Whatever of good they see among us,—our equal laws, our chartered liberties, our constitutional stability, our colonial possessions, our shores a refuge for the persecuted, our land a rallying point for the free,—these, all these, come

of our religion, of our respect for the Bible, of our practical recognition of the promise, "them that honour me I will honour." "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto thy name be the glory," for all the things they have seen in our house.

iv. Thus far, brethren, I have reasoned only upon the *general* aspects which our country will present to the stranger. We have shewn him only England as it is at first sight. Let us suppose him to tarry long enough, or to have eye keen enough to look into our national life a little further. The surface is fair, what does he find beneath? And then in answer to the question 'what has he seen in thine house,' we are obliged to say that, upon the most momentous subject that can affect man's moral happiness *he has found* "*a house divided against itself.*"

He comes to see a dismembered church;—an outwardly rent and torn Christianity;—a people able to unite with consentaneous energy upon all other subjects, but envying, biting, devouring one another, when the question is concerning a religion of peace. And there is no laying to heart the great danger we are in, and the great mischief we do by these our unhappy divisions. But, as if we gloried in them, we widen rents, and deepen prejudice, and perpetuate party names, and try to bring out our differences



in more defined and sharper outline. Ephraim strives not to hide his envy of Judah, and Judah seems to rejoice in an opportunity to vex Ephraim. And thus, by the nation which God seems to have chosen to set His name there, is He most dishonoured. More cruel than the soldiers, we rend not the garments of Christ, but his sacred body. His one great prayer,—the one thing he asked *of* us and *for* us,—the dear wish which lived last in his heart, and was almost last on his lips,—‘that we might be all one,’—in spirit, in faith, in hope, in baptism, in the church which nourished us, and in the Lord we served,—this prayer we have hindered. The reason why our divine Lord desired this unity,—the moral sublimity to be exhibited by such a spectacle,—the standing witness it would supply of the gospel’s high original,—we have not cared for this; or at least we have cared for our sects, and schools, and denominations more. And we remain untaught by the result of Missionary experience. The wild Indian has rejected our religion, taught by a very instinct of his intellectual nature that truth must be a great unity. ‘*These men,*’ he has said, ‘*profess to be the servants of the most High*,’ ‘*God come to shew unto us the way of salvation,*’ but we find them shewing different ways;—how can we agree to receive a religion from men who cannot agree among themselves? If we

‘are to believe that God *has sent them*, they ‘all  
‘should be one.’”

The barrier is fatal, brethren, to one mighty benefit which might have been looked for from our anticipated gathering. We shall have among us the Mohammedan in his sensuousness, the idolater in his blindness, the atheist in his pride,—the rationalist offering sacrifice at the shrine of intellect, and the Romanist suing for help from all the creature host of heaven,—Oh! what an overpowering demonstration had been presented of the divinity of revealed religion, if all that believed had been of one heart and one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity. I charge not fault upon any pre-eminently. We are *all* in fault. We do not pray for unity:—it may be doubted if, in our hearts, we sufficiently desire it. We seem rather to leave this great element of strength to the men of the world, who know its value far better than the children of light. Our coming pageant is an illustration of this. It is a great display of united purpose, agreeing wills, harmonised and well concerted action,—differences of creed, or clime, or colour, or government being all laid aside that the useful arts of life may be honoured, and man work with man in advancing

<sup>1</sup> “Abridged from the speech of a chief among the North American Indians, given in the eloquent Bampton Lecture of Archdeacon Grant on the subject of Missions.



the cause of amelioration and progress. The Prince-Consort shewed much power of keen observation, and spoke the mind of an enlightened philosophy, when, recommending the present project, he observed, "Nobody who has paid any attention to the particular features of our present era, will doubt for a moment that we are living at a period of most wonderful transition, which tends rapidly to accomplish that great end,—to which all history points,—the realization of the unity of mankind." Yes, brethren, and as helpful to that higher unity which is to make all men one in Christ, and which all good men long to see, we should bid God speed to such works. But, at present, the children of this world shame us. The strangers who are coming to us will see nothing but a united world and a divided church. They will go into our places of amusement, or business, or literature, or science, and they will see unity for gain, and unity for pleasure, and unity for mental improvement, aye and even unity for sin; but for God and the things of God they will find only heart-burnings, and railings, and rents, and strife. O ye followers of the Prince of peace, "What have they seen in thine house?"

v. But I pass to another feature of our social institutions which will not bear too close inspection. I have spoken of civil government:—and of our own, as blending, in judicious equipoise, the popu-

lar and oligarchic element, as having a rectifying principle for its own mistakes without necessitating the interference of shells and barricades,—I have supposed our visitors will both think and speak well. But if any ask the stranger on his return, what have you seen in their house of legislative assemblies, I see not how he is to escape from the admission, ‘I have seen *a legislature that has not the honesty or the courage to be Christian.*’

Brethren, this witness is true. God is too little honoured in our senate. The things which concern His name meet with no response of sacredness. And the few faithful there, who have not bowed the knee to Baal,—who before the Herods and Pontius Pilates of that assembly will witness a good confession,—whether it be to shut out from their deliberations the avowed opponents of a crucified Saviour; or to ask that the nation may humble itself when lying under the scourge of the Almighty; or to pray that our holy Sabbaths may not be sacrificed after the fashion of continental reproach and dishonour,—these men, I say, can scarcely be heard. The house cannot bear their words. Their utterances are drowned in the derisive sneers of infidelity; whilst, too often, a speech of official smoothness bows out their pious proposals from the assembly. Yet, these are the men whom we Christians elect. We seem not to care for piety, or even common reli-



gious character in our representatives. Let them only be pledged to remit a tax, to support a policy, to vindicate and watch over some class-interest, and, in regard of all moral qualities, they may be men whom we "would disdain to set with the dogs of our flock."

Most painful is it too, that our visitors should be coming to us just now, in the days of our shame, and weakness, and all but sold, and sacrificed, and abandoned protestantism. They will see us,—men from the land of Luther, and Melancthon, and John Huss, will see us,—tamely insulted by the agents of an unscrupulous priesthood, unchristianized and unchurched to our face, the sanctity of death-beds invaded by arts of priestly cozenage, our young women decoyed to living graves, our laws violated and our penalties defied, chartered organizations of sin and mischief sheltered in the heart of our land;—and the legislation to meet all this is a feeble inanity, which is to be first passed with difficulty, and then evaded and laughed to scorn. Yes, my brethren, a parliament that is either too weak, or too indifferent to be Christian, a people that will not bestir themselves for the religion of the Bible, Antichrist grasping the sceptre of an usurped dominion, and British protestants content to take the law at his hands,—this is 'what they have seen in thine house.' But all this I trust is only for a time. It cannot

be that our people will long endure to see the truth of God dishonoured, their own liberties shaken, their hearths and homes invaded, and the glories of the Reformation trodden under foot. One arm there is not shortened, and one eye that never sleeps. "Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight. Put them in fear, O Lord: that the nations may know themselves to be but men."<sup>1</sup>

vi. Some other things I had noted which it must be for our shame and sorrow that the stranger who comes among us should be obliged to see. Could we dare to introduce him into the interior of our commercial life? Could we tell him of all those conventional duplicities and concealments which would be superfluous if, as is alleged, both parties *did* understand them, but which must be a rank fraud if either do not? Must the extortions of the usurer be laid bare? or the advantages which the great man takes of the little man's necessities? Must we have to tell of bankruptcies resorted to as a means to be rich, or the loud trumpet that is sounded when one, whom a declaration of insolvency has set free, has afterwards the honesty to pay his debts? Have *such things* been seen in thine house? Or, to come to humbler walks of life, (not that the

<sup>1</sup> Psalm ix. 19, 20.



sin is to be found there only ; far otherwise)—is there not one sin for which, in the eyes of our continental neighbours, we must appear degraded and sunk indeed ? One so pre-eminently British, that even the descendants of Ham may take up a reproach against us, and say that Japheth blushes no more for his father's sin. — Oh ! as the stranger walks through our streets, and sees the tall poison-house rearing its decorated and gilded front, the gorgeous lamp flinging its glare over the countenance of laughing mindlessness,—women unsexed, children brutalized, homes made wretched, souls lost,—who that meets him will not be afraid that he should ask us, ‘What have we seen in thine house ?’

Such, my brethren, are a few of the things which will be seen by the men who come to us from far countries. For the things which may do us honour, we must give God thanks ; for spots and blemishes we have but to take to ourselves the shame. We have much to make us grateful, but as much to make us give ourselves unto prayer. Let us not be “high minded, but fear.”

III. And now, having spoken of what our visitors *must* see, let me conclude with a few words on some things it were greatly to be desired that they *should* see. And

i. First, I hope they will see, on the part of all

of us, a *frank, generous, unsuspecting sympathy with the professed objects of the Exhibition.*

We may have each our own opinion of its expediency. Many of us may believe that it will neither benefit commerce, nor advance science, nor soften down prejudices, nor promote more of friendly union and concord among the different nations of the world. Still, these are among its *avowed* objects. To promote them, is part of an implied compact entered into by every foreigner who sets foot on our shores. And it is no part of the generous nature of Britons to suspect them of other and less worthy designs. Admit the desire, on the part of all the socialists in Europe, to set up a republic in England,—red, black, or grey,—where is the possibility of any combined arranged international action? Where are the funds to come from for the transport of all the ruffianly raggedness? Besides, the great majority of those who are known to be coming over, loathe socialism as much as ever we can do; and, on the first signal for violating that honourable confidence, under cover of which each nation will feel itself to have been invited hither, all the fidelity, and truth, and spirit, and courage of honest men from either hemisphere, will be enlisted on the side of tranquillity, and law, and order. There are some moral considerations involved in this great project, about which we can



hardly be without some misgivings. But of any secretly purposed scheme of political mischief I could never see reason for entertaining any serious apprehensions. Such suspicions have always appeared to me unreasonable, unjust, ungenerous, un-English. May none such be seen in our house! And hence,

ii. Secondly, I trust the strangers will see practised among us *all the courtesies of a refined Christian hospitality.*

We are constitutionally a proud people,—proud and something more. Our own estimate being taken, we are monopolists of all the excellencies, religious, moral, and intellectual, to be found in the wide world. Until lately, our rudeness when travelling abroad, was remarked even to a proverb: and was only endured from us, more than from others, because it was better paid for. I believe we are getting better instructed in our civilities:—and this we shall do the more we study the charity of the New Testament. I once heard of a man of eminent refinement of manners, a sceptic, won to admiration of the scriptures by a perusal of St. Paul's epistle to Philemon. He was struck not by the love of the apostle, but by the polished and refined kindness of the Christian. May I suggest then, brethren, that in any, even the most casual intercourse with foreigners, we make a religious duty of our

politeness. It is an affair of something more even than national character. Our courtesies may make a Christian, and our hospitalities may save a soul.

iii. Thirdly, it is essential to any moral results for good, either to ourselves or to strangers, that there be found among all who profess and call themselves Christians, *a godly jealousy for our domestic moralities, and for the maintenance of our Sabbath sacredness.*

To various possible evils on these accounts, I have adverted before. All promiscuous assemblages, of the nature contemplated, must be fraught with danger. Rules will be broken through; moral safeguards will be allowed to be removed for the time; licenses will be both taken and allowed on the plea of a difference in the national habits; and the alleged novelty of the circumstances will be pleaded in extenuation of a less watchful conscience. Let parents and masters take good heed to this. If we permit our social proprieties to be tampered with, the foundation of national morals will be shaken, and our security for domestic virtue gone.

Especially would I urge upon all, a due observance of the Lord's day. Most of those who are coming hither have no scruples on this head. Having paid their semi-sabbatic tribute in the morning, they will think themselves at liberty to



give the rest of the day to wandering curiosity, or jocund mirth. In this view, I feel the prospect before us to be very sad. We can expect nothing else, for the next few months, than that our parks should be turned into a fair, and our streets into a carnival. And we have unprincipled men at home who will minister to this profanation:—proprietors of railroads and steam boats, who, to raise the price of shares, would sell their country as they sell their souls.<sup>1</sup> From being partakers of such high affronts against the majesty of heaven, either as shareholders or passengers, I may suppose all before me free. We spend our breath for nought, if any of you could take delight in such godless pleasures, or live by such godless gains. But, for the present necessity, there is required of us something more than this. The house of God excepted, all places of concourse should be avoided on the Lord's day. Curiosity might attract to our parks; but, remember, he goes to share the sin who shall go to witness it. God has committed his Sabbath to our trust. The stranger that is within our gates must see it honoured:—in the church, in the house, in the words we speak, and in the works we both avoid and do, must see that we “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.”

<sup>1</sup> Foremost in the rank of these unholy traffickers are the proprietors of the Brighton and Eastern Counties' Railways. Their insults to the Saviour, emblazoned in three different languages, suggests a painful parallel.

iv. Lastly, I would say, let us labour both collectively and individually, to *turn this our intercourse with the strangers to their own spiritual and everlasting benefit.*

Let us try to spread more widely the principles of our holy faith. Let us distribute, judiciously and with wise cautions, the incorruptible seed of the word. Let us throw open our churches, and, as far as we can, our pews, for frequent preachings and frequent prayers. Let us beware of offences—never speaking of the religion of others but with a bridle on our tongue. Let it be seen that, with us, love for souls is an active, living, diffusive principle;—that it prompts to sacrifices, compels effort, leads to a stepping out of the way to do good. We will be kind, and considerate, and studious to please; but the spiritual aim shall shine through—“We seek not yours, but you.” “Come with us, and we will do thee good.” You have come to look at the world’s treasury of all precious things: let us speak to you now of “the pearl of great price.” You have gazed with astonished delight on the miracles of artistic skill: come behold another miracle,—Him that was “called Wonderful,” laying down his life for man. You have paced the interminable galleries of that crystal tabernacle,—a building which, like Jonah’s gourd, seems almost to have come up in a night: let us speak with you freely on your



preparations for a more enduring structure, "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Such an affectionate interest in the stranger's welfare, evinced with feeling, put forth with discretion, enforced by a godly walk and followed up by prayer, may send many over the seas rejoicing. They came to wonder, they shall return to pray. They came to be pleased, they shall return to be blessed. They came to see a perishable palace, they shall return, having found an immortal crown. Oh! 'WHAT THEN WILL THEY HAVE SEEN IN THINE HOUSE?'

"God be merciful unto us and bless us." The Lord cause his face to shine. The Saviour, now risen from the tomb,<sup>1</sup> send down upon his waiting church the breathings of a Pentecostal fire. And if there be found, dwelling at our Jerusalem, men "out of every nation under heaven,"—Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites; Musselman, Infidel, and Jew; some in their ignorance, some in their hatred, some in their gloomy pride,—from every church, and home, and heart in our land, may the voice of united prayer go up, that ere long we may hear of them speaking in their own tongues "the wonderful works of God!" Amen.

<sup>1</sup> 1st Sunday after Easter.

